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TRAVIS COUNTY PURCHASING QUARTERLY

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Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

In the Spotlight Scott Worthington

By Jorge Talavera

Scott Worthington's job title may as well be "Problem Solver." As the Purchasing Office's Business Systems Consultant, he is the man employees call on when computer programs get a mind of their own or other technological difficulties arise.

"You never know when there will be a crisis," says Scott. "That's why when my door's closed...it's always open."

"I begin the problem-solving process knowing that it's the person who is experiencing the problem, not just their equipment," he says.

Users may get frustrated or angry with their equipment. After dealing with computers for the past 25 years, it's easy for Scott to empathize. "I've been there, I understand," he says mantra-like.

"I'm a support person. My job is to help others' jobs run as smooth as possible...and I really care about that."

Scott received some advice in 1980 from an ex-supervisor. He was told "You need to stop being brusque." Scott responded, "What's that?" in a brusque way. His ex-supervisor said,

"That's what I'm talking about...it's (peevy) off the customers." He considered that an important wake up call. "I'm still working daily on that piece of advice," he says.

Convincing others of a project's importance or a need that calls for their expertise does require tact. Although Scott is used to guiding people through processes, getting others to do the same for him can prove challenging.

"Coordinating personnel and resources from different departments to solve Purchasing's specific issues can be difficult. Sometimes my requests may seem to others like a burden and not just a simple need in our office."

"Listening, patience and understanding," are essential in these types of situations. "Everything else falls into place when these



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New Construction Trade Enhancement Advisory Committee Begins Work

The newly created Construction Trade Enhancement Advisory Committee (CTEAC), formed to "advise and assist the Court in developing policy initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the HUB Program," met on a monthly basis for the first quarter of fiscal year 2004.

A monthly meeting calendar was established with committee members agreeing to convene on the second Thursday of each month. Official meeting time is 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. in the Purchasing Office conference room.

Charter members of the CTEAC include representatives from seven local community organizations. They include Carol Hadnot, Community Mentor Protégé Initiative (CMPI);

Hopeton Hay, Grijalva and Allen, PC; James Harper, Austin Black Contractors Association (ABCA); Jose Vera, Austin Minority Trade Association (AMTA); Mahesh Naik, Asian Construction Trade Association (ACTA); Phil Thoden, Associated General Contractors of America (AGC); and Sergio Ornelas, Hispanic Contractors Association (HCA). Sylvia Lopez, HUB Coordinator, will serve as facilitator and meeting recorder.

Mr. Harper, ABCA, was elected as Chairperson and Mr. Vera, AMTA, was elected as Co-Chairperson. The Commissioners Court will receive monthly a brief summary of each meeting's highlights no later than two weeks after each meeting.

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Purchasing Liaison **SPOTLIGHT** *By Sylvia Lopez*



Brenda Sasaki, our first featured Purchasing Liaison, is the Purchasing Clerk for the Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD).

Brenda is tasked with ordering and ensuring the payment of items needed by her entire department of approximately 300 employees.

She attacks her task with a positive attitude and the enjoyment of dealing with all types of people. Brenda describes herself as a "people person," like her mother Maudine, a devoted employee of 25 years with the Pflugerville Independent School District.

It is Brenda's late father M.B., or "Speedy," however that gave her the best advice she has ever received. "Always be honest and true to your word," he told her, "and you'll succeed in whatever you do."

This philosophy and positive attitude earned Brenda the "Outstanding Co-Worker Award," for her department, after being there only a little over a year. Although relatively new to the CSCD, she has been employed with Travis County since 1989.

Few people know she is a practical joker and die hard sports fan. She claims if you cut her she would bleed orange because of her love of the University of Texas Longhorns. But

Brenda loves sports altogether because of the competitiveness and the fact that one minute could change the entire outcome of a game.

Brenda feels that being a Sagittarius makes her considerate of other people's feelings while keeping her persistent in achieving her ultimate goal of retiring happily and giving her two boys, Brandon and Devin a good start in life. Health, happiness, friends, and persistence make up Brenda's recipe for a good life. ☺

Brenda can be reached at 512-854-4610 or brenda.sasaki@co.travis.tx.us.

Do you know a purchasing liaison you would like to nominate for this article? Email sylvia.lopez@co.travis.tx.us.

Link up... to helpful purchasing information on the Web: resources for building specifications

www.astm.org – American Society for Testing Materials provides a global forum for the development and publication of voluntary consensus standards for materials, products, systems, and services.

www.tbpc.state.tx.us/spec_lib/ – formal standards and specifications for a number of commodities purchased in volume by the State which establish minimum quality requirements, identified by a standard/specification number and an effective or revision date

www.county.org/market/purchasing/guide.asp – The Texas County Purchasing Association presents a Guide to County Purchasing which provides a basic understanding of procurement activities, the County Purchasing Act and many useful purchasing resources.

Spotlight · Continued from Page 1

things work well."

Process improvement is another element that comes with the territory. "I'm always looking for ways that the Purchasing Office can save money and for anybody who interacts with us to have a better experience, better access to information, better ways to get information to people."

One accomplishment was assisting in making formal procurements downloadable from Purchasing's Webpage last year to increase competition and reduce costs. He is also a member of the Intranet Design Team, tasked with re-designing the County Intranet to give employees more reasons to visit and use the internal website.

Scott would be working with

technology somewhere if he weren't working with computers at the County. "I can be happy doing anything. In essence, I make the best out of whatever situation I'm in, even if it's not the most desirable. I'm not above any menial task."

Where computers fall on Scott's priority list is one problem that doesn't need solving. "Computers are just tools...stuff," says the "techie," and adds that he rarely plugs in when he gets home unless he's "recording." A guitar player for 33 years, he has a home recording studio for his productions.

"I've realized there are other more important things in life," says Scott, "the key being relationships with family, friends, the people I know from church. That's much more enjoyable to me." ☺

New Committee · Continued from Page 1

Each member has received an informational binder outlining the Committee's objectives, roles, responsibilities, expectations, term expectancy, reporting requirements and an overview of the County's HUB Program initiatives.

Staggered terms for committee members have also been established. Mr. Hay, Mr. Vera, and Mr. Harper will each serve for two years. Mr. Thoden, Mr. Ornelas, Mr. Naik, and Ms. Hadnot will all serve for three years.

Some agenda items for subsequent meetings include County HUB Program recommendations for revisions; County HUB subcontracting participation reports; and County contract compliance, monitoring and substitution procedures. The next CTEAC meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2004. ☺

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the County's policy for soliciting HUBs between \$2,500 and \$24,999 in value?

A: With this type of purchase, Purchasing staff is required to obtain at least three informal price quotations (telephone, fax, letter, e-mail, etc.), at least one of which must be a HUB. Purchasing Agent Assistants (PAA's) are aware that small dollar purchases are the best opportunities to utilize HUBs. All PAA's ensure and document that an equal opportunity is maintained among bidders and that contractors are treated equally to the same information concerning the purchase. Vendors can stay abreast of small dollar opportunities by keeping vendor file information current and communicating often with purchasers.

Q: How does a requisitioner convert open-market requisitions into contract requests?

A: Follow this four-step process:

1. Change requisition type from "1-Open market" to "2-Contract."

2. Ensure the vendor number and contract number are included.
3. Delete original line items.
4. Re-enter line items using the correct contract reference numbers.

Q: How does a vendor/contractor become "HUB Certified" with the County?

A: Vendors do not become "Certified" through Travis County because the County has no HUB Certification process. A County Certified HUB must first be on the vendor database, which is done by completing and submitting a bidder's application, available via email. In addition, a copy of a current certificate must be on file from one of the three County recognized certifying agencies.

Recognized HUB vendors must be certified as a: Minority/ Woman Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) with the City of Austin Department of Small and Minority Business Resources; Historically Underutilized Business with the State of Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC), formerly General Services Commission; or a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise with the Texas Unified Certification Program (TUCP). To download applications visit www.tbpc.state.tx.us/hub/forms/index.html, www.ci.austin.tx.us/smbbr/#howdoes, and/or www.dot.state.tx.us/business/tucpinfo.htm.

Purchasing Staff Phone List

Main Number (512) 854-9700

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	854-9761
P.A.'s Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	854-9766
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	854-9915
Purchasing Clerk III	Juan Gonzalez	854-9916
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	854-9917
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	854-9918
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	854-9451
Business Sys. Consultant	Scott Worthington	854-4851
Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	854-6458
Warehouse Supervisor	Dan Rollie	854-6459
Fixed Asset Associate	Matt Phillips	854-6459
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Vacant	854-4852
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Jason Walker	854-4562
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Eric Francois	854-9853
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Richard Villareal	854-4881
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Jerry Raisch	854-9724
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Marvin Brice	854-9765
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Sylvia Gonzalez	854-5860
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Bonnie Floyd	854-4173
HUB Program Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	854-4561
HUB Program Specialist	Jorge Talavera	854-9914
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lolly Jones	854-4204
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lori Clyde	854-4205
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Rose Garcia	854-9763
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Loren Breland	854-4854
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Steve Parks	854-9764
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Vacant	854-4853
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Donald Rollack	854-9760

Quarterly Quote

"It is not what you hold in your hands at the end of your journey that counts... it is who you've touched along the way."

- Author Unknown

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Special Events Calendar

Austin
February 11, 2004

Fourth Annual Purchasing and HUB Connection Forum

Sponsored By:

Teacher Retirement System and Texas Workforce Commission

Location & Time:

1000 Red River Street
Austin, Texas 78701

For more information contact:

Debbie Pina, TRS HUB Coordinator, at 512-463-2411

Austin
February 26, 2004

"Doing Business Texas Style" Spot Bid Fair and HUB Training

Sponsored by:

The University of Texas at Austin in conjunction with: the Texas Legislative Black Caucus

Location & Time:

Frank Erwin Center, 1701 Red River Street

For more information contact:

Annette Smith at
asmith@austin.utexas.edu or visit
www.bexar.org/smwbe

Austin
May 19, 2004

County HUB Program 10-Year Anniversary "Building Success One Victory at a Time"

Sponsored by:

Travis County, H.E.B., Business Success Center, Lone Star Infrastructure, Community Mentor Protégé Initiative and King Cheesecake

Location & Time:

Bank One Tower ground floor,
7600 Burnet Road, 6 – 8 p.m.

For more information contact:

HUB Office at 512-854-4561 or
sylvia.lopez@co.travis.tx.us

SHARING

What's in the world that's easier to share
If we've seen everything and been everywhere
Than helping someone to live a good life
To achieve a happiness and overcome strife
The things we know can help someone else
And make us feel good about ourselves
For knowledge shared is a good tree bearing
A ripen fruit of hope and endless caring

©Donald E. Rollack
January 20, 2004

HUB Program Evaluation Results Presented to Court

By Jorge Talavera

On July 15, 2003, the Commissioners Court authorized the hiring of Colette Holt and Associates, attorneys at law based in Chicago, Illinois, with an expertise in equal opportunity, affirmative action and small, minority and woman-owned business programs. Ms Holt was contracted to review the County's HUB Program and provide "advice on additional County actions to improve HUB results."

On November 4, 2003, Ms. Holt presented her findings to the Court. She stated that after working closely with the City of Austin for many years, she remains "amazed at the level of commitment and resources that ...the Austin community puts into its Minority Business Enterprise Programs."

"I think to some extent the results speak for themselves," she said. "For those of you that don't follow this issue let me assure you that is not the case across the country."

"This past year we have seen a reversal very heartening to us who support fairness and inclusion," said Ms. Holt, citing the upholding of the Denver unified city/county government minority business program in the federal appellate courts, "in a resounding, very lengthy detailed opinion."

"The court I think laid out a road map for us as to what type of evidence they will require in support of an affirmative action program." Ms. Holt also referred to the more publicized Supreme Court ruling upholding the University of Michigan law school's admissions program, which as it concerns to contracting said, "you can have a constitutionally adequate affirmative action program."

Ms. Holt's firm put on a private sector critique at that time, "to look at what happens where there are no programs. The court accepted it and said the best evidence for whether you need an affirmative action program is what happens when you don't have one."

Ms. Holt asserted to the Court, "The unfortunate fact of the matter is if you have no program, you have no goals, you have no commitment, you will basically have no participation."

She provided the State of Missouri as "a perfect example," which runs a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) program on their federally funded highway contracts as a receipt of conditions for using federal funds. "They put no goals on their state funded highway contracts. They are getting 14 percent DBE participation on their federal contracts and zero, literally zero, on their state funded contracts."

"The unfortunate fact of the matter is if you have no program, you have no goals, you have no commitment, you will basically have no participation."

Before providing detailed suggestions on what the County could do to improve the effectiveness of its Program, Ms. Holt commented on her observations of its current state. "I do want to say I was very impressed with the level of participation that the County has been able to achieve using a totally voluntary HUB Program."

"I think this must be a testament to persuasiveness, job owning and a basic commitment in the Austin community to try to be more inclusive. You have a program that relies simply on peoples' good faith efforts...the levels of participation that were shared with me in the annual reports are really quite remarkable given the fact that it's all voluntary. So I really have to commend the staff and everyone who is involved in that in doing a lot without much in some ways... certainly compared nationally to what you would see in a HUB Program."

Ms. Holt's suggestions involved:

1. *Updating Program documents*
2. *Setting contract-specific goals on larger construction projects on a pilot basis.*
3. *Collecting proper data to permit evaluation of the Program pursuant to a disparity study.*
4. *Conducting random audits of HUB participation.*
5. *Strengthening "Good Faith Effort" criteria*
6. *Revising the Bidder's Application*
7. *Crediting only Certified HUBs towards goals*
8. *Increasing the use of the Construction Manager at Risk procurement method*
9. *Pre-qualifying Prime contractors on larger projects, and;*
10. *Monitoring contract performance*

View video files or transcripts of the entire presentation on the Commissioners Court website. Item #18, 11/4/2003



When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you. We at the Travis County Purchasing Office are striving to improve our service to you. Please let us know how we can better serve you.

NOTEWORTHY...

The Travis County Purchasing Office would like to wish all County employees and the local business community a very happy and prosperous new year. May your 2004 be filled with good health, happiness and success.

Travis County welcomed a new construction buyer in December 2003. No stranger to County purchasing, Richard Villareal, now a Purchasing Agent Assistant (PAA) IV, takes on the position left vacant by David Moreno's departure last October. The Purchasing Office extends congratulations to Richard on his promotion and wishes him good luck in his new role.

Also in December 2003, Lori Clyde, Purchasing Agent Assistant III, was certified as a Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB). Lori passed the examination regulated and administered by the National Institute of Government Purchasing (NIGP). Other Purchasing Office personnel certified as CPPB's include Marvin Brice, PAA IV; Bonnie Floyd, Assistant Purchasing Agent-Commodities, also a Certified Texas Purchasing Manager (CTPM); Oralina "Lolly" Jones, PAA IV; and Jerry Raisch, PAA IV.

Purchasing's Intranet site is getting a makeover. Along with the rest of the County Intranet's "look" and "feel," the internal Website's utilities will be redesigned. The Intranet Design Team's aim, headed by Maria Rogers of ITS, has representation from various departments including Purchasing. The team's aim is to make the internal website more aesthetically pleasing and user friendly to encourage more use by County personnel.

The Purchasing Office proudly supports the new Wellness Program established by HRMD and the Commissioners Court. Investing in the well being of County employees will surely yield a healthy return on the County's minimal investment. To learn more about the program see the "Window on Wellness" newsletter on the County Intranet at tcnet/depts/hrmd/wellnessNewsletter/windowonwellnessnumber1.pdf.